THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Public hearing held before the Special Committee,
David Wheeler, Executive Councilor, Chair; Russell
Prescott, Councilor; and Joe Kenney, Councilor, at the
Merrimack Town Hall, 6 Baboosic Lake Road, Merrimack,
New Hampshire, on Tuesday, September 25, 2018,
commencing at 7:00 p.m.

Court Reporter: Michele M. Allison, LCR, RPR, CRR NH LCR No. 93 (RSA 310-A)

1 SPEAKERS 2 Jennifer Reczek - Project Manager, DOT 3 Dave McNamara - Project Manager, Stantec 4 Ron Crickard - Environmental Manager, DOT 5 Steve LaBonte - Assistant Administrator, Right-of-Way, 6 DOT 7 8 9 10 OTHER ATTENDEES FROM DOT 11 Peter Stamnas - Director of Project Development 12 Trent Zanes - Design Group Leader, Highway Design 13 Samantha Fifield - Senior Design Engineer, Highway Design 14 Paul Coddington - Chief of Administration, 15 Right-of-Way 16 Susan Hubschmann - Hearings Coordinator, Right-of-Way 17 Dena Rae - Chief Agent, Right-of-Way 18 Linda Schoffield - Agent, Right-of-Way 19 20 21 22 23

MR. WHEELER: So I will open this meeting. I am Executive Councilor Dave Wheeler. Merrimack is in my district and therefore I'm chairing this meeting tonight. This is a Special Committee appointed by the governor and the Executive Council. Executive Councilor Russell Prescott is with us here tonight, and we expect Councilor Kenny here shortly. He has the longest drive and in this weather he may be delayed a little bit, but he should be here.

This hearing is concerned with proposed improvements to Route 101A from Craftsman Lane to Continental Boulevard, and on Craftsman Lane at the intersection with Boston Post Road. It is pursuant to RSA 230:14 and the Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987.

The purpose of this hearing is to determine the necessity of the occasion of the layout and to hear evidence of the economic and social effects of such a location and its impact on the environment and its consistency with the goals and objectives of such local planning as has been undertaken by the towns.

Following the hearing, this committee will evaluate all matters brought to our attention and make

definitive decisions relative to this layout that you see over here.

A representative from DOT will contact each property owner that is affected and discuss individual concerns. It is therefore important that all individuals desiring to make requests or suggestions about this project, to do so tonight. I would remind you that you have ten days from the date of this hearing to submit any other material you would like considered by this committee.

At this time I would ask Jennifer Reczek from -- the project manager for this project to present in a formal manner the layout which she has proposed. After that we'll open the floor to those who would like to address the committee.

I will request that all desiring to speak upon recognition by me, step up to the microphone, state their name and address, and the recorder would like you to spell your name to make sure that we have it correct, and make your statement. Please print your name and address on the sign-up sheet. This hearing is being recorded and a transcript will be available later.

So Jennifer, take it away.

MS. RECZEK: Thank you, Councilor Wheeler, and members of the Special Committee. Good evening, Ladies and Gentlemen. Can you hear me? My name is Jennifer Reczek. I'm the project manager for the Department and it's my pleasure to be here tonight on behalf of the Department.

As Councilor Wheeler mentioned, tonight's meeting is a public hearing to present the Department's layout for the proposed project on New Hampshire 101A.

I would first like to introduce the other people representing the Department tonight. I've got Ron Crickard from the Bureau of Environment on the far side. I've got Steve LaBonte to my direct left from our Bureau of Right-of-Way. Dave McNamara is at the boards. He works for our consulting firm, Stantec, who are our partners on this project in developing the engineering.

Here with us tonight we also have Peter

Stamnas, the director of project development at the back of the room, and Trent Zanes and Sam Fifield from the Bureau of Highway Design. We also have Tracy

Tufts and Walter Woo who are part of the Stantec team.

New Hampshire 101A is an important east-west commuter route providing access to the turnpike and into Nashua. In an effort to improve this corridor a master plan was created in 2002 that outlines recommended land-use guidelines and transportation improvements between Milford and Nashua.

On the transportation side, this study identified many deficiencies throughout the corridor. These included roadways and intersections without adequate capacity for today's traffic, intersection safety concerns, and poor pedestrian accommodations due to the lack of sidewalks or crosswalks.

Of the many projects identified in this corridor plan this was one of the midterm projects that was moved forward by the Nashua Regional Planning Commission and was first added to the state's ten-year Transportation Improvement Plan in the 2015-2024 version.

The project being presented tonight is one of many steps in improving the capacity in the corridor with a future project also identified in the Nashua section of the roadway.

The project that we are presenting proposes to widen the section of 101A between Boston Post Road and Continental Boulevard. It proposes improvements to the intersection of 101A and Continental Boulevard, and also proposes to reconfigure the intersection of Craftsman Lane and Boston Post Road, which is currently used as a bypass for the lights on 101A.

These plans were presented at a public informational meeting in July 2015 to the town council of Merrimack in June of 2018 and again at a public informational meeting in August of 2018. Based on some of the feedback that we received, we were able to make some modifications to these plans. Those changes that we were able to make has been included in the plans that are shown tonight. Once we've completed this presentation I will turn the meeting back to Special Committee Chairman Wheeler to receive any comments or questions from those in attendance.

I'll now ask Dave McNamara to explain the plans that you see and present the details of the proposed layout.

MR. McNAMARA: Thank you, Jennifer. Good evening, everyone. While we're getting the screen on

here, I'll start over at the plan. It'll be easier to see here just to orient everybody a little bit at what this is. You know, 101A, kind of running across the plan here, this is going west to Amherst and Milford and then east into Nashua. The Nashua line is actually right there. And then you see Continental Boulevard going up to the north.

So the yellow you see is proposed pavement. In this case a lot of it is matching existing. It's going to be an overlay over existing. There is some widening and some modifications. We'll get to it as this goes on.

The lighter green in here is off-roadway impacts, kind of landscaped areas and grass areas.

There's kind of medium blue, our stormwater management ponds. They're not -- other than this one, they are not intended to be permanently wet. Again, we'll talk in a little bit more detail about those as this goes on.

Purple is a proposed sidewalk or a relocated sidewalk in this case. The orange are driveways; minor side roads that are being impacted to tie back in. Red are the existing buildings.

The broken green and blue lines are existing right-of-way lines. A thicker version of those are proposed right-of-way lines. The solid orange are proposed permanent easement lines. And then in here you can see the existing wetlands is kind of this faded blue hatch. So that's what we're looking at on the plan. We'll go through kind of the pieces of the project a little bit.

So the project area -- the existing project area of 101A consists of three westbound lanes, two eastbound lanes, and then some combination of combined -- or a combination of raised and painted medians that develop turn lanes at each of the three signalized intersections within the corridor. This section of 101A sees about 42,000 vehicles per day.

There is sidewalk on the north side from

Boston Post Road to the east and then sidewalk on the south side just east of Continental Boulevard.

Despite the sidewalks, there are no existing pedestrian crossings within the project area across 101A.

So we're looking at the project in three -- basically three components: There's the New Hampshire

1 101A and the Continental Boulevard intersection
2 improvements, which is really to develop capacity; the
3 sidewalk connectivity and pedestrian access
4 improvements; and then finally Boston Post
5 Road/Craftsman Lane intersection, which is a
6 traffic-calming safety component of the project.

So we'll start with the 101A/Continental Boulevard intersection. The improvements here are a third eastbound lane and then a second right-turn lane from Continental Boulevard and an exclusive right onto Continental Boulevard from 101A.

So you can see them a little bit clearer here, the third lane coming through here, which ultimately ties into the three-lane eastbound section going into Nashua east of our project. This is the second right-turn lane from Continental onto westbound 101A. And then you can see this exclusive right turning onto Continental Boulevard from westbound 101A.

So the proposed benefits of Continental Boulevard, when we look at the traffic on these types of projects, we look at existing counts and we generally project them out about 20 years. So on

Continental Boulevard, the average at the peak hour, which is the p.m. hour in this case at Continental Boulevard, if no improvements are made, the delay is over three minutes -- the average delay for the intersection is 193 seconds.

So that's with the existing configuration that's out there today factored out into the future about 20 years. With the proposed improvements, we're looking at about a 61-second average delay across that whole intersection. So it's about a 70 percent reduction in delay within that intersection based on these improvements.

another thing is we're looking at the signals. We can look at the clearance interval modifications. There has been some concerns raised about cars running red lights in this area and that's one way to mitigate that type of problem.

So the next component is the sidewalk connectivity between Continental and Boston Post Road. So as I said, there is a sidewalk on the north side on the westbound side. We're proposing to add one on the south side of 101A, basically adjacent to the easterly

lanes over here; add crosswalks at both Boston Post
Road and Continental Boulevard; and also improve the
bike accommodations at the Continental Boulevard
intersection.

So this is just a section looking at the widening area here. You can see the existing left and two through lanes and then a little bit of a shoulder over here. We add this travel lane, basically slide the shoulder over, and then add a sidewalk immediately adjacent to the roadway. And then at Continental you can see the crosswalks on all four legs. These would extend across the right-turn lanes in here as well.

And then for bicyclists, with that development of this right-turn lane, we keep the bicycle shoulder out so the bicycles cross the intersection with traffic like they should.

So the final component of it is the Craftsman Lane traffic calming piece. This reconfigures the Boston Post Road and Craftsman Lane intersection.

There is a concern with westbound traffic on 101A using the Craftsman Lane as a cut-through to skip a part of 101A and get out of the traffic a little bit.

This will help eliminate that or at least slow it

down. It'll also reduce speeds on Craftsman Lane and kind of clean up this really flat Y intersection that exists today.

And then the second piece of it, up in here you can see there's actually a town right-of-way that bisects the church parking lot. So the church has -- owns both sides of this parking lot, but there is a public access across it. So that represents some safety concerns with the school, with church in accessing both sides of the parking.

So as part of the project that would be discontinued. Craftsman Lane will be T'd up onto Boston Post Road in here and then this portion of Craftsman Lane will be abandoned.

So we have met with the church about exactly how -- what the final configuration here is going to be. They're looking at some internal options about their best way to internally circulate across this parking lot, so that's an ongoing discussion with them. That will continue.

Just a view of the Craftsman Lane that basically we just talked about. Can see it a little bit better up here. That's the cut-through. This is

the T'd up Craftsman Lane onto Boston Post Road. Hall Road would remain and tie into Hall Road right in here, and then the abandonment of Craftsman Lane in this section down here.

So with any roadway projects, stormwater management is a critical component. This section of Manchester -- or Merrimack is regulated by the Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer System, or MS4 regulations, which do require increased water quality treatment. So we need to treat 100 percent of the impervious area, 100 percent of the stormwater that falls on the impervious area within the project limits.

For this particular project there is some existing treatment around the Continental Boulevard intersection, a couple hundred feet on either side, either approach to it, and that outlets down into the Pennichuck Brook. So we don't have to get into that area as that is already being treated by a system that was put in place about 15 years ago.

So that's actually, if you look down in here -- so this area and this area here is all treated through an underground system. That's down here, the

limit of our project.

end of the project that we do need to treat. So everything you're looking at here in color, our drainage areas, so all this pavement today, anything that falls on it is untreated. This area here gets collected and it gets piped out ultimately into Stump Pond in the back here.

This area here gets picked up and is piped down and sheet flows through outlets on the side of 101A, kind of west of our project, ultimately into this wet area at the bottom of the hill. And then this middle section, centered kind of around the Home Depot intersection here, this is all piped into two parallel outlets that go between the Connection, Inc. drive and the auto parts store over here.

So what we're proposing is nine new Best

Management Practices, or BMPs, in order to treat

basically the water on that impervious area. One of

them, this one in here we're proposing is essentially

a traditional stormwater pond that you're probably

used to seeing on the side of the road. It's going to

contain water all the time. But the rest are

bioretention ponds or swales, which are smaller, dry.

They don't retain water and they will dry out after about two, three days after a storm event.

The bioretention system is a little bit -part of the reason we're using them is they do have
higher treatment efficiencies than kind of the
standard detention ponds. They utilize natural
filtering media. They are shallow, dry systems, so
they kind of work into the landscape a little bit
better. They're generally low maintenance.

There is a variety of plantings that you can use, kind of balancing aesthetics and maintenance, if you will. All of them will have overflow structures. So as the water rises in them after a certain height, it will flow into an overflow structure and that will just be piped out into the outlets.

Some of them -- depending on the geotechnical, in some areas we have some ledge, some areas we have some higher groundwater. They'll be lined underneath. So the water will go through the filter media and get cleaned, then it will get picked up by an underdrain and, again, piped out to the outlets.

And then we do have some infiltration requirements through New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. So we do have to do some groundwater recharge where these systems will infiltrate directly into the groundwater. It looks like from what we're looking at now, one of the ponds up in Craftsman Lane is probably where we'll be doing that in this case.

So just a little more detail. Up here is kind of a section along 101A in the widening area. This shows the cut into the slope and then the small bioswale with a fire pond that's right in here and then blending back into the slope.

So this is a little bit more detail on the bioretention pond. You'll see the grass media here, which is what we're currently proposing so they can just be mowed on a normal mowing schedule since it's just grass. They sit on a couple inches of loam and then the filter media is this lighter brown in here, which is a combination of compost, sand, and loam basically. And then in the line systems you have this kind of stone reservoir at the bottom and there will be underdrain pipes running through it.

So as the water filters through here, it gets cleaned, and then the clean water collects in the stone, gets into the underdrain pipe, and then that's piped out of the system into the closed system and ultimately to the outlets. So in this case we're essentially using all the same outlets that exist today on Craftsman Lane down to the west and then the outlets between the two parking lots.

Just to touch on construction a little bit, we're looking at this as a two-season construction project. It's largely to minimize traffic impacts and maintain the flows that are out there. There is a good amount of utility work that we're anticipating between our drainage and some of the utilities that are out there that may need to be relocated.

As I mentioned, we have done some preliminary geotechnical investigations. There's pockets of ledge. There are some areas where the groundwater is a little bit higher. We don't anticipate blasting. We anticipate its mechanical means to remove that ledge, but there are -- in either case there are requirements on vibration and noise that the Department has in their standard specs and those can

be modified and worked with individual abutters if there are more stringent requirements that they need based on their use of the property. And drive and business access will be maintained during construction.

Traffic control during construction: Most of the work that is being proposed is to the outside portion of the roadway. We're widening to the edges. So the intent -- and we anticipate we can maintain the lane configurations in the middle. They may shift around a little bit using some of these median areas. We may take a lane and shift them up or shift them down to create the work zones, but the intent is to keep the two lanes heading east and the three lanes heading west throughout construction for the -- outside of work.

So a permanent condition during working hours when the contractor is on site with traffic control, there may be lane -- daily lane closures to install drainage or pave or -- but those can be handled on off-peak hours, you know, kind of managed around the traffic. But then when they're gone, the intent would be to keep essentially your existing condition, shift

it around a little bit and keep your existing condition in place.

Utility coordination, there are a good amount of utilities up here. The verifications are ongoing with the various owners. We do know there's aerial and underground utilities and they're both privately and publicly owned in the project corridor. So any relocations that are required will be done in accordance with the DOT's Utility Accommodation.

Right-of-way impacts, there is going to be a little more discussion on kind of the general process, but just to touch on some of specifics here, we are anticipating seven narrow strip acquisitions generally around the Continental Boulevard intersection to accommodate the right-turn lanes and the widening and pushing the sidewalks out, you know, with those lanes. We do not anticipate at this time any full property acquisitions. So it's just minor, small, narrow strips.

Permanent easements, as I said, is noted on the plan in orange. These are generally for future maintenance and access by the DOT to maintain the new drainage systems, to maintain traffic signal mast arms

and equipment, and retain a small retaining wall if it looks like it's going to be necessary.

Temporary easements generally aren't shown on these plans. They will be developed as the process goes on, coordination with the DOT Right-of-Way as well. These are usually for construction access, driveway matches, if they've got to chase a driveway to kind of meet grade, they might have to go past the right-of-way a little bit, and these are put back to the existing condition at the end of construction.

There is a contractor staging/storage area shown as a temporary easement on the current vacant parcel down here. It has a potential for the DOT to negotiate and have available for contractors to use for staging.

 $\label{eq:continuous} \mbox{ And with that, I'll turn back to Jennifer for } \\ \mbox{the rest.}$

MS. RECZEK: All right. Thank you, Dave.

During the public informational meeting we heard

several comments regarding blasting, and we understand

that that's a concern in this area due to some of the

past private development that's occurred.

So as Dave mentioned, we are not anticipating

blasting at this time, but if it does become necessary, the Department has protocols in place to kind of monitor those operations to prevent damage to any surrounding structures or the environment.

Dave also touched on the large number of utilities in the area. Once those conflicts are identified, the Department works with the utility companies to develop relocation plans. And at that point it becomes the responsibility of the utility to work with their clients to coordinate any sort of disruption of service that might be required during that relocation process.

So as part of any of our projects the Department must consider and document how our project impacts the environment. At this time I'll ask Ron Crickard to provide a summary of the environmental aspects on the project.

MR. CRICKARD: Thank you, Jennifer. Good evening, members of the Committee, Ladies and Gentlemen. Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, the Department has evaluated alternatives to the proposed project and impacts the project will have on surrounding socioeconomic, cultural, and

natural resources.

The Department has coordinated with federal and state environmental agencies, including the Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency, and New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, just to name a few. In addition, input was sought from town officials as well as concerned citizens.

After evaluation of information gathered, an environmental document was prepared, and I have a draft of that document available here tonight if anybody would like to review it. I will give you a very brief summary of just some of the environmental impacts that we have studied for this project.

The proposed project is expected to improve the flow of traffic. Therefore, the completed project is not expected to noticeably increase noise levels or impact air quality at any adjacent residences.

Temporary increases in noise and dust are anticipated during construction of the project, but these temporary increases are expected to return to normal following construction.

The proposed project will require impacts to

wetlands and surface waters under the jurisdiction of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Department will obtain the necessary wetlands and shore land permits prior to construction. The Department will continue to coordinate with the appropriate agencies to ensure that all wetland impacts are minimized and all permits are secured prior to construction.

As mentioned earlier, to promote and protect water quality, the Department has incorporated appropriate stormwater treatment measures into the design of the project. The contractor will also be required to prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan during construction.

Finally, pursuant to Section 106 of the

National Historic Preservation Act, the Department, in

coordination with the Federal Highway Administration

and New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources,

must take into account the impacts of the project on

historic resources. The project area has been

reviewed for potential historic resources, which can

include structures over 50 years old, as well as

archaeological sites. No such resources will be

impacted by the project. That is that.

MS. RECZEK: Okay. Thank you, Ron. As Dave also mentioned in his presentation, the proposed improvements will require acquisition of property rights in the form of easements and strip acquisitions. Again, no complete acquisitions are anticipated at this time.

I'd like to ask Steve LaBonte from the Bureau of Right-of-Way to describe the process of acquiring the necessary property rights.

MR. LaBONTE: Thank you, Jennifer. Members of the Special Committee, Ladies and Gentlemen, before I go into the right-of-way procedures for this project, there are a couple things I'd like to address.

First, as Councilor Wheeler has said, if anyone wishes to submit any additional testimony as a result of this hearing or in regard to these plans, you can address the material to the chairperson of the Special Committee and mail it to the address shown on the hearing handout map within ten days of tonight's hearing and it will become part of the official record.

The hearing map I'm talking about looks something -- looks just like this and the address is right here in the upper right-hand corner. It will receive the equal consideration with anything presented tonight. These maps are available from Department staff or down on the table in the lobby downstairs.

We also have with us tonight copies of a booklet entitled Public Projects and Your Property, which describes the right-of-way acquisition and relocation assistance procedures that are utilized by the State. That's this green book. Again, that's down on the table in the lobby downstairs. This booklet is especially useful for those property owners affected by this proposed project.

at this hearing and during the ten-day period, the Special Committee finds necessity for the layout, several things will happen. The Department will begin to negotiate with owners -- again, the negotiation procedure -- with owners of the property rights necessary for the project.

Next, with approval to proceed with the

design of this project, the Department will be preparing appraisals for each of the properties affected by the proposed construction you see on the plans. A staff appraiser from the Department or a fee appraiser hired from private industry will contact each affected owner to appraise their property. These appraisals will reflect the fair market value of the property rights needed for the new construction.

Prior to starting the negotiations, appraisals are reviewed separately to see that all appraisals are accurate and have taken into account all applicable approaches to value. The value in the reviewed appraisal will be the offer of compensation used by the Department as a basis for negotiations.

An agent of the Department will visit each property owner and discuss each acquisition separately. I urge owners at this time to ask questions and bring up specific factors they feel should be considered. If the property owner is satisfied with the offer, deeds are prepared and ownership is transferred to the State. If the owner is not satisfied with the offer of just compensation, the matter will be referred to the New Hampshire Board

of Tax and Land Appeals, where the owner will have the opportunity to make a case for additional compensation. It is important you understand that this can be done with or without an attorney. Either party can appeal the board's decision to the superior court if they are dissatisfied with the board's decision.

Anytime after this hearing or before the design approval, all information in support of this hearing is available at the Department's headquarters in Concord for your inspection and copying. If needed, there is relocation assistance available and a right-of-way agent will be assigned to the project as necessary.

That's all I have. Thank you, Jennifer.

MS. RECZEK: Okay. Thank you, Steve. As noted, following this hearing a transcript will be prepared that will include all testimony that is heard tonight, as well as any written statements that are received within the ten-day comment period, and this will be posted on the project website.

We will also be posting the plans from this evening, so please check back on the website for links

to other project documents as we continue and the project develops.

If support is found for this proposal and the Special Committee finds in favor of the layout, then we will complete the environmental approvals that Ron spoke of and move forward with the final design. The final design includes development of the detailed contract plans, the acquisition of property as needed, the environmental permitting, and then putting the whole package together for contractors to bid on.

In addition, the Department has initiated discussions with the Town of Merrimack to enter into a municipal agreement for this project. The agreement is required for the Department to design and construct the improvements at the Craftsman Lane and Boston Post Road intersection since these are town-owned roads. It is also needed to outline the maintenance requirements for the new and reconstructed sidewalks along 101A.

So we are hopeful that if all goes well the contract will be ready to advertise in the fall of 2020, approximately two years from now. This will allow for construction in the summer of 2021 and 2022.

As Dave mentioned, we are planning on the two construction seasons to allow for the existing traffic configuration to be maintained throughout the construction process.

The preliminary cost for construction right now stands at about 4.1 million. We're still early in the design, so there could be changes based on the conditions that we find as final design progresses.

The funding is coming from 80 percent federal funds, 20 percent state funds in the form of turnpike toll credits. We do not anticipate that any town funds are required for this project.

Councilor Wheeler, this concludes the Department's formal presentation for the widening of New Hampshire 101A and improvements to the intersection of Craftsman Lane and Boston Post Road. I'd like to thank all of you this evening for attending.

At this time I respectfully ask the Special Commission -- the Special Committee to find in favor of the necessity for the layout of the project as presented here this evening. Thank you.

MR. WHEELER: Thank you, Jennifer. So this

begins the public input portion of our public hearing.
I have three speakers that are signed up, and if
someone else decides they want to speak after these

three, let me know or sign up on the table, or they can get a green card over here, I think, on the table.

So with that, we'll call on Bill Boyd. If you could -- just a reminder to state your name and spell your name for our transcriber, please.

MR. BOYD: Thank you, Mr. -- Councilor
Wheeler, and through you to the membership, to Council
Kenney and Council Prescott.

My name is Bill Boyd, B-o-y-d. I live at 139 Joppa Road in Merrimack, and I'm a public official here in Merrimack. I serve on the town council. So I'm very happy that you folks are here tonight. I want to thank the DOT and the consultants for their presentation tonight.

I don't necessarily disagree with what's being proposed. My objection is -- not an objection, just a concern twofold. Number one, the sidewalk on the southbound side of Route 101A I really have a lot of concern, for the simple fact that A, the town's going to assume responsibility for this particular

sidewalk and it's difficult to assume responsibility for, in my impression, strictly anecdotal; that you don't have pedestrian traffic to begin with over in that general vicinity. The employees of PC Connection, people that use the church, generally they go out from the building to their car and they're leaving.

The more logical place would be to utilize the sidewalks that are on the north side of 101A and strengthen the crosswalks at 101A and Boston Post Road and further strengthen the crosswalks at 101A and Continental Boulevard.

Directing pedestrian traffic onto the northbound side -- the northerly side sidewalk on the westbound sidewalk of 101A makes a lot more logical sense for the simple fact that you have neighborhoods on the north side of that road, you have neighborhoods that access this area by Naticook Road, you have people on Amherst and Boston Post Road that access 101A, and you have people on Seaverns Bridge Road.

So to me it would be logical to strengthen the sidewalk on the northbound side, if anything, to accommodate the myriad of neighborhoods that exist

both in Merrimack and Amherst.

Number two, the other concern that I have is the proposed layout for Craftsman Lane and Boston Post Road. If you're already going to be improving and trying to calm that particular area, it almost behooves that if the DOT really wants to install sidewalks, that makes more sense to put sidewalks there connecting with Craftsman Lane so people can walk down the road to Joey's Diner, as opposed to having no sidewalks there and using the sidewalks that exist there now and -- I'm not going to say fend for your life, but, you know, it creates an interesting situation if you do have pedestrians in that area that are trying to negotiate that particular part of Boston Post Road and Craftsman Lane.

Lastly, I would also ask them to consider putting sidewalks along Continental Boulevard, on the westerly side of Continental Boulevard up to Naticook Road, to accommodate that particular neighborhood.

But from where I sit -- you know, if I'm using a sidewalk and I'm at PC Connection, there's no place for me to go westbound. If I have to go to Frederick's Pastries, if I have to go to Wal-Mart, I'm

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1
    getting in my car and I'm going there. I'm not
2
    walking there. But if I have to go to Target, if I
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    want to go over to Texas Roadhouse, I can easily
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    access the sidewalk right there and walk right down
5
    there.
6
             To me it's -- I'd rather see a stronger
7
    commitment to a bike lane or improved bike passage
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    along that particular section of 101A than the
    expansion of sidewalks on the southerly side of 101A.
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             MR. WHEELER: Thank you.
             MR. BOYD: Thank you very much.
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             MR. WHEELER: Any questions for Bill from the
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    Special Committee members? No, we're good. All
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    right. Thank you, sir.
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             MR. BOYD: Thank you very much for allowing
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    me to speak.
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             MR. WHEELER: Thank you. And John from
18
    Hinckley, Allen, please.
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             MR. SOKUL: I'm good for now, but thank you
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    very much.
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             MR. WHEELER: You're good for now? Okay.
22
    And Bob Pratt?
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MR. PRATT: Good evening. I'm Bob Pratt,

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Robert Pratt, P-r-a-t-t. And I represent the interests of Connection, PC Connection, and the owners. And if I could just with a pointer, just for the sake of illustrating the areas that are affected by us.

We own 730, 732, which is not illustrated here, which is the former theater that is at Post Road Plaza, and we also own a different parcel, but it's part of the organization 736 Milford Road, which was the former New England Apple Pie.

So as you can see, we own a pretty good chunk of the frontage that's affected by that project. And we'd like to say that, you know, overall we don't necessarily have any objection to the project; we have an objection to the design of the project, the way it's presented now. We have met with the design team. We came to the -- I was representing the interest of the owners at the August meeting, and we expressed our concern about a number of things.

We are concerned about the slope configuration, which is on the south side of the highway, the impact of the extension of the third lane and the sidewalk will have on the top of that slope,

and then the impact that the stormwater management system will have at the base of the slope.

Right now you're at -- in most of those areas, I think the worst conditioning you've got is probably about a 3:1 slope, might be getting into a 2:1 slope in some areas. But as we get into this design that's been presented to us to date in its current format, it looks like a good portion of that is now going to be a 2:1 slope or greater depending upon how the design configuration of the stormwater management does play at the toe of that slope.

We have some concerns also about the traffic count that's on the -- on that segment of the development and whether or not the actual traffic count in the studies took into account not just the entire corridor improvement, but if they took into account just the impact in this area right here.

Right now what we see is we see a considerable amount of traffic, and it certainly warrants expansion in the easterly bound lanes there, but we're concerned that without that traffic in the immediate sense having a place to go as it goes easterly before the rest of the corridor is fully

developed, that we have the potential of creating stacking lanes that become a larger parking lot in that area.

And our concern with that is emergency vehicles. And what we've had a chance to take a look at, and we discussed it amongst the design team also, is that, you know, to our knowledge Merrimack fire trucks have a signalization system on them that actually releases the green light and gets the traffic flowing. Nearly none of the other areas, any of the other -- the towns have any sort of a signalization technology incorporated within their emergency vehicles.

We found a number of cases currently where traffic has taken a turn through our parking lot, emergency vehicles actually get beyond this section. And what we're doing now is we're creating that third lane and creating a stacking lane there. As the lights turn red, yes, it will stack up a number of more cars than what you have right now. It will move that traffic west to easterly quickly until it gets to a point where there's no third lane, and that's just a short ways down into Nashua.

So I'm concerned that there's going to be some backup there or certainly the potential for it and we ask that that be taken -- a closer look be given to that.

We also asked about some of the guardrail systems, because some of the earlier drawings didn't have guardrails. It was explained to us that as we're approaching the 2:1 slope, there's a requirement for guardrails. There's going to be an incorporation of guardrails along the southern side of the sidewalk. So that's great, but that's one more element now that creates a steeper slope as we develop that.

That area right now is mowed weekly. It's got an irrigation system in it. Very nice to look at. Very well groomed. That's not going to be the case. We won't have the ability to groom that with a steeper slope. We're not going to have the ability of making that appearance to be a natural appearance and making it to be a pleasant experience when we've got the stormwater management along the toe of that slope.

We have talked with the design team. We met collectively at our office to take a look at the possibility of some options. We expressed our concern

about the placement of the stormwater management, the style of it, whether it can be relocated on the north side.

Unfortunately, the most recent letter that we got from the State was that this was not cost effective; that this was not the most efficient approach. We feel as though that there's a distinction between cost efficiency and quality in design, and we feel as though that we're lacking a little bit on the quality of design, and we would like that to continue.

So the bottom line, we're not satisfied with the response that we received from the State, and we'd like that exploration to continue to a better system. We don't think that we have it there now. And we feel as though as this design develops and there's no longer an opportunity for public input, there could be some stumbling blocks when you go from a two-dimensional concept to a three-dimensional design and how that stormwater management is going to affect the slope and our parking lot.

We're also concerned about the efficiency of the stormwater management system, because everything

looks great in October when the water is flowing freely, there's no problems whatsoever. We've illustrated to the design team what happens in January and February when that area has 15, 20 feet of snow built up there for parking lot removal and you run into a stormwater retention area now that's frozen. It's blocked. You can't get that flow there. You can't get the flow there to get it to be filtered to go into the pond that's located just to the east side of our property.

So there's some concerns there we feel as though it has to be vetted out. We're far from satisfied yet. Our concerns have not been met.

We're concerned about the construction easement that also takes place along with the construction easement -- along with the stormwater management. To give you a sense of that, that whole area that we're talking about, design, which is right along through here, our building is about 900 feet long from one end to the other.

Just to give you a sense of dimension, we're looking at that stormwater management that starts well to the east of that and goes nearly the full length of

that building. We're not talking about a small layer; we're probably talking about an impact on 10 percent of our parking just during the construction easement.

Quite frankly, we don't have those parking -the additional parking available for that to have a

10 percent reduction in that. So there has to be some
consideration as far as the construction to be able to
keep us operational.

Jennifer mentioned our concern about ledge removal. We've gone through a considerable amount of pain when we had the Home Depot being developed and that was a lot of open blasting. And the impact of the blast there was actually impacting or data center. We worked with Maine Drilling & Blasting when that was taking place, and they worked with us. They were very helpful. They worked on redesigning the blast.

So instead of a great big pow, you ended up with pow, pow, pow, you have a series of blasts. And they were able to get indications on the seismic system they put in. They put in seismographs throughout construction. They were both on our data center floor, around the perimeter of the building and around the perimeter of the property so that they

could perform a blast, they could evaluate it and determine what needed to be adjusted to get it to an operational -- so that we could function properly with that.

Now we're moving to within the closest spot.

Let's say we're moving within 200 feet on the westerly end of our building, to our data center, probably about 1200 feet when you go to the easterly end of that. There are ledge outcroppings there now. When you take borings and you do the test borings, you're going to get indications along the pattern of the boring what the depth the ledge is at. That doesn't mean that that's the profile that you're going to encounter there.

You can see the ledge on our properties are exposed, forms of the ledge, as you go along the edge of our parking lot now. They look like boulders. I assure you they are part of the ledge profile there.

We don't know what you're going to run into working along the edge of that, because our recollection of the work along 101 (sic) was that you ended up with blasting at 101 and you went -- you went to what they call an overblast condition in which you

go down to get all the utilities and anything incorporated within the removal site. And there's a good chance that a number of that debris, the boulders, the wreckage from that, the blast, was pushed onto that slope. So where you may not get many solid ledge all the way down, you will encounter large boulders or ledge outcroppings along that area.

We can respect that there will be some of that that can be done either by mechanical removal or by trench blasting. Either one still causes, creates a seismic event, if you will. In order to break the rock, you have to have some impact on it. Whether that's by blasting or by mechanical means, you'll still see the same impact, otherwise, the rock wouldn't break. So we're very concerned about that.

We also have primary and secondary telecommunications lines that come in that run right across this area, right near the parking lot. Great care has to be taken to make sure that we stay in business, because we are at a few dollars short of \$3 billion in revenue per year. All of that business from all of our sites across the country, through our distribution center in Wilmington, Ohio, all this

processes through that data center. If that goes down, we're out of business. So we're very concerned about protecting that and the manner in which it's taken care of.

There's also a septic line that runs, oh, from a pip right about in this area here that runs up along, and there's some disagreement on where that line goes. We have one set of plans that we have which shows a four-inch sewer pressure line that runs, let's say, west to easterly and ties in down by Friendly's. That's going to have to be located and chased, because the State has a different location on that. And quite frankly, we're not in dispute about it. We just don't know. That precedes us, and we are very concerned about that. That, again, puts us out of business. So as you can see, collectively we've got a lot of concerns on this. It hasn't been addressed to our satisfaction.

I would like to introduce John Sokul. John will be working with us and helping us to represent our legal needs. And I'd like to ask that any communications we continue to have, that John is also copied on that, and we'll see that you have his

address before the -- before we leave tonight.

Contractor parking on 736, that's the first that I've heard about that tonight. The people that I represent also own that. Our plans for that building have not been unified as of yet. We really don't want to be constricted on what we can use that for because we have contractor parking in that area. So I think we've got to take a little bit closer look at that and have some more serious discussions about that.

will get formal communication from us within the next ten days. But I need to leave here, if there's one thing I need you to understand is, we are not satisfied with the design of this. We feel as though there needs to be more effort, more collaboration, more cooperation on this, and we need your help with that and would appreciate it. Thank you.

MR. WHEELER: Thank you, Robert. John, would you like to give us your presentation?

MR. SOKUL: I don't -- excuse me, I don't have a presentation.

MR. WHEELER: Okay.

MR. SOKUL: I'm just here to represent PC

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Connections' interest. I did have one question
1
2
    about --
3
             MR. WHEELER: Give me your name and spelling,
4
    please.
5
             MR. SOKUL: John Sokul, S-o-k-u-l.
             MR. WHEELER: Okay.
6
7
             MR. SOKUL: Hinckley, Allen, H-i-n-c-k-l-e-y,
8
    A-l-l-e-n.
9
             MR. WHEELER: Thank you, John.
10
             MR. SOKUL: I did have one question about the
11
    stormwater treatment. When you're treating the
12
    impervious, is it the entire impervious in the
13
    corridor or is it just the new impervious that's being
14
    created by the project?
15
             MS. RECZEK: In this area with the MS4, it is
16
    a hundred percent of the impervious area that the
17
    project is touching.
18
             MR. SOKUL: Thank you.
19
             MR. WHEELER: All right. Thank you, John.
20
             MR. PRATT: Excuse me, can I say something
21
    else?
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             MR. WHEELER: Sure. Go ahead. Say your name
23
    again for the record so we know who's speaking when we
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do the transcript, please.

MR. PRATT: Bob Pratt, P-r-a-t-t. Jennifer,
I'm curious about that. You said that it's the entire
impervious area, but I notice that on the north side
of 101A that you're utilizing, or at least
incorporating the piping for the existing structures,
at least it looks like that on the concept drawings,
that those -- that that water -- the stormwater that
goes into those structures goes directly into a
42-inch line which goes directly into the fire pond,
irrigation pond, whichever you would like to refer to
it as, which is on the east side of it.

And the reason I'm making that point is because the use of that existing system, there is no pretreatment whatsoever there. If there's any treatment at all, it's restricted to the sumps within the catch basins. You're just picking up particular matter. You're not picking up anything that has a potential for contamination, petroleum products, low-level BOCs, nitrates. You're not picking up anything within that system.

 some degree, but I don't understand how we can take one tactic for the north side of the road, which is untouched, which you said that's going to be part of this, and then take a different tactic for the south side, which requires not only the sumps for the initial treatment, but then pretreatment within the bioswales. So I'm not quite getting that. I'm wondering if you can clarify that.

And one thing that I didn't ask when I was up before, can you show us what was changed on these drawings since the last time we met in August? You said that there had been some improvements on this, some modifications. I understand there may have been something on Craftsman Lane. I'm more interested in the 101A itself. Can you let us know what there was for a difference between what we saw in August and what we're seeing now?

MR. WHEELER: Is this something the Department can -- chooses to explain right now?

MS. RECZEK: I'm not sure that we're prepared to answer all of those questions, but to clarify, again, with the MS4, the pervious areas that we're touching we need -- I'm sorry, the impervious areas

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that we're touching we need to treat. So if we're not touching it with construction, it's not within the treatment limits that are required.

MR. PRATT: So for clarification, it's not
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MR. PRATT: So for clarification, it's not the entire width, north to south width of 101A; what you're addressing under the MS4 guidelines, the MS4 requirements, is strictly the widening of the travel path, the sidewalk, if you elect to do that, and any other disturbances that you've got with impervious materials along that area?

MS. RECZEK: Generally whatever is shown in yellow, so it would be the entire width of the roadway.

MR. PRATT: But the entire width of the roadway does not go into pretreatment.

MR. WHEELER: This is going to take a little more discussion and maps and -- and a longer discussion, but I would encourage both parties to have that discussion --

MR. PRATT: Thank you.

MR. WHEELER: -- after the hearing.

MR. PRATT: Thank you.

MR. WHEELER: Is there anyone else who would

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1
    like to give us their input on this project?
                                                   Bill,
2
    you want to have a further comment?
3
             MR. BOYD: If I could, Mr. Chairman?
 4
             MR. WHEELER:
                           Yes, sir.
5
             MR. BOYD: Thank you.
6
             MR. WHEELER: Say your name again for the
7
    record, please, Bill.
8
             MR. BOYD: Again, for the record, Bill Boyd,
    B-o-y-d, 139 Joppa Road in Merrimack, Merrimack town
9
10
    council. Is it okay to ask Jennifer a question
11
    through you?
12
             MR. WHEELER: You can ask her a question and
13
    if she has a simple answer, she'll answer, if not, we
14
    can have a further discussion.
15
             MR. BOYD: Perfect. Who's going to be --
16
    under the MS4 permit, who will be responsible for
17
    treating the water?
             MS. RECZEK: I'm not sure I -- in terms of
18
19
    the design?
20
             MR. BOYD: Is it going to be the Town of
21
    Merrimack that will be assuming the responsibility of
22
    treating that water or will it be the State of
23
    New Hampshire?
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MS. RECZEK: For the maintenance of those
1
2
    BMPs?
3
             MR. BOYD: No, I know the BMPs will be your
    responsibility. I'm talking about the actual water
4
    treatment like the filtration.
5
6
             MS. RECZEK: So that's done in the swales.
                                                           Ι
7
    guess maybe that might be a better answer --
8
             MR. BOYD: Second question:
                                           The Town of
    Merrimack has a comprehensive blasting ordinance that
9
10
    was put into effect back in 2010 to accommodate the
11
    growth over at the Merrimack Premium Outlets. Does
12
    the State's blasting requirements supersede the town's
13
    blasting requirements or do they compliment each
    other?
14
1.5
             MS. RECZEK:
                          I don't have the expertise on
16
    the blasting. We do have people within the Department
17
    that deal with that on a regular basis, so we'll have
    to look into that.
18
19
             MR. WHEELER: We'll get you an answer, Bill.
20
             MR. BOYD: I appreciate that, Mr. Chairman.
21
    Thank you.
22
             MR. WHEELER: Yeah.
                                   Is there anyone else who
23
    would like to give their public input? Does the
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Department have anything further?
 1
 2
              MS. RECZEK: We do not.
 3
              MR. WHEELER: Okay, then we will close this
 4
    hearing.
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               (At 7:58 p.m. the hearing concluded.)
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<u>CERT</u>IFICATE

I, Michele M. Allison, a Licensed Court
Reporter, Registered Professional Reporter and
Certified Realtime Reporter, do hereby certify that
the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of my
stenotype notes of the hearing taken at the place and
on the date hereinbefore set forth.

I further certify that I am neither attorney nor counsel for, nor related to or employed by any of the parties in the action to which this hearing was taken, and further that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed in this case, nor am I financially interested in this action.

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